

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims:

1. (Original) A mutant of *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis*, which produces lactate at high volumetric productivity, which is at least twice that of the *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* 19435, and produces lactate at specific productivity, which is at least 1.5 times that of the *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* 19435, and produces high amounts of lactate dehydrogenase, which is at least twenty times that of the *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* 19435.
2. (Original) A mutant according to claim 1, denoted TMB5003, deposited at Deutsche Sammlung von Microorganismen und Zellkulturen under deposition number DSM 14489.
3. (Original) The use of *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* TMB5003 in the production of lactate.
4. (Original) The use of *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* TMB5003 for the production of the enzyme lactate dehydrogenase, LDH, in particular L-lactate dehydrogenase, L-LDH.
5. (Currently Amended) A method for the production of lactate on a glucose containing medium, wherein an inoculum of *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* TMB5003 is grown on a medium comprising glucose as carbon source.
6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein the growth is carried at conditions optimized for production of L-lactate.
7. (Currently Amended) A method according to [~~claims 5-6~~] claim 6, wherein the growth is continuous at a dilution rate of at least 0.5 h^{-1} .
8. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 7, wherein the growth is continuous at a

dilution rate of at least 0.7 h^{-1} .

9. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 8, wherein the growth is continuous at a dilution rate of at least 0.8 h^{-1} .

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to [~~claims 5-9~~] claim 5, wherein the growth is carried out at unrestricted feed of glucose.

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to [~~claims 5-10~~] claim 5, wherein the growth is carried out at a pH of above 6, preferably pH 6-7.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to [~~claims 5-11~~] claim 5, wherein the growth is carried out at a temperature of between 25 and 30°C , preferably 27.5 to 30°C .

13. (Original) The use of lactate produced by fermenting the mutant *Lactococcus lactis* spp. *lactis* TMB5003 in food and as a chemical commodity in general.